THE

"HINDU MESSAGE"

A Weekly Review of Indian and World-Problems from the Hindu Standpoint.

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VOL. 3.] THURSDAY NOVEMBER 21, 1918. [No. 5.

The **Hindu Message** stands for

(1) The Maintenance of British supremacy with self-government for India,

(2) Co-operation with the different communities of India without prejudice to Hindu Dharma,

(3) Education of the Hindus as an integral part of the Indian Nation,

(4) Advancement of Material prosperity on a spiritual basis and

(5) Dissemination of pure Hindu Culture.

Annual Subscription Rs. 6 only.

For *bona fide* students Rs 3 only.

Postage As. 13. Extra.

Single copy As. 2 only.

All business communications and remittances to be addressed to the Manager and all literary contributions and books for Review to be addressed to the Editor, THE HINDU MESSAGE, *Srirangam.*

A Vision Of India.

NAIMISARANYA.

By K. S. Ramaswami Sastri, B.A., B.L.

O holy forest where the sages pure
Secure from life's pollutions, self-withdrawn
From passion's stormy night to virtue's dawn
And freed by Dharma from sin's tempting lure
Around him sat whose words did them assure
That love redeems the souls held deep in pawn
By sin till they by grace divine are drawn
To His fair feet which are life's sovereign cure.
He spoke in words which flowed in honeyed stream
In sweet Puranas full of Godly lore
That showed life's purpose and its source and goal.
They said in Joy to him: "From passion's dream
We wake through thee and gladly Godwards soor
Rejoicing in the raptures of the soul."

The Hindu Message

THURSDAY EVENING 21, NOV., 1918.

The Madras Mail and Mr. Srinivasa Rao.

Government officials should, we think, keep aloof from all current political discussions. Both Europeans and Indians as a rule wisely follow this course. The exceptions are very rare, and we are thankful that it is so. It is clear that no Government servant can venture to write a work condemning the constitution, policy, or measures of Government. No Government will tolerate it, and any official who does it will promptly receive his order of dismissal. We think that Government should not similarly, without specially obtaining its permission, allow any official in its service to discuss current political topics, parties, or opinions. The position in which a Government servant places himself by writing such a work is one which is sure to cause misunderstanding, and he must necesarily do harm. For, if he supports the Government's policy or measures, it is difficult for any one—even for the writer himself—to be quite sure that he will not be, even unconsciously, be swayed by bias in favour of his employer. There will surely be many who will misunderstand him, or at least fail to understand him as he wishes to be. This is not surely a position in which Government should like any of its servants to place himself. It will also do Government itself harm. For, many will be inclined or induced to feel that the Government is one which requires such interested special pleading from its servants. Moreover, if such a person receives any lift or rewards, many will attribute it not to his meritorious service, but to his literary support. For all these reasons, we are of opinion that an official who takes it upon himself to write an apology for Government or discusses current political questions or opinions does little good either to himself or to the Government he serves. Of course, these views do not apply to the head of a department or other official specially appointed either as a member of the Legislative Council or otherwise to depend or explain Government's policy or measures against the strictures passed on them within the walls of the Council Chamber or outside.

Holding these views, we need not say that we do not approve of the publication—or revised publication—of a work like Mr. Srinivasa Rao's "The Crisis in India,"—if we are to judge of it, as we do at present, from what *The Madras Mail* says of it in its issue of October 23rd last. The extracts given by our Anglo-Indian contemporary in his article on the book show that the author (who is a District Judge) is a gentleman who brings to his self-imposed task stubborn prejudices againt men of various views and schools of thought and action from whom he differs. The judicial temperament which attempts to see an adversary's position in its proper light is one which is opposed as the poles to Mr. Srinivasa Rao's. For instance, he says:—"The difference between Moderates and Extremists lies, first, in their attitude towards the British Government, and secondly in their methods." As

regards the attitude to Government, our contemporary quotes only what he says of the Moderates:—"The attitude of the Moderates is one of unquestionable loyalty." This evidently *implies* that this is not the case with those whom Mr. Srinivasa Rao. calls Extremists. This, we think, is both offensive and untrue. The Government itself has never questioned the loyalty of the supporters of the Congress Mr. Srinivasa Rao says:—"It is a part of their (the Moderates') creed that India cannot get on without the British Government for a day; on the other hand the Extremists think no great harm would befall the country if British rule should cease this moment." This is not at all true. For, even the most ardent Home Ruler does not think that any possible Home Rule administration can take charge at present either of India's foreign policy or the army and navy. Moreover, no Home Ruler wishes to exclude Europeans in India from any Home Rule administration which he wishes or may wish to see formed. Furthermore, the Indians who support the Congress do not wish to have responsible government introduced into the land "*this moment*," as Mr. Srinivasa Rao avers without knowing fully what he is speaking about. They want to go through a process of probation and preparation, and want also that the definite steps to be taken towards responsible government should be laid down and that they should be taken at the stated intervals. All this has been made repeatedly clear. At the same time, India is ever to continue a part of the British Empire. So, even though India secures self-government after the period of prepation is passed through, it will continue to be a British dominion in which the British will continue to live, and thrive, and partake in the administration. Such are the ideals of Congressmen and even of avowed Home Rulers.

Again, Mr. Srinivasa Rao says:—"As between a European oligarchy a Brahmin oligarchy, if a choice has to be made by the people, they would unhesitatatingly vote for the European. The Brahmin oligarchy means perpetuation of caste. It means subjection of women to the thraldom of ages. It means for millions of the depressed classes not much hope of redemption." The Congress has always advocated a wide and thorough system of popular representation. Besides, it has adopted the principle of communal representation. Hence, it is clear that Indian public opinion is not at all in favour of setting up what Mr Srinivasa Rao calls "a Brahmin oligarchy." There has never prevailed in India at any period of its history an administration by "a Brahmin oligarchy." Especially, since the country passed under British rule and even under the earlier Mohammedan rule, no "Brahmin oligarchy" has or could have exercised power. Hence, if caste, subjection of women, or millions of depressed classes remain in the land, it is due not to the "Brahmin oligarchy," but to other causes. Hence, Mr. Srinivasa Rao's dread of a Brahmin oligarchy is either a fiction of his perverted imagination or a clever device of an ingenious brain

THE HINDU MESSAGE will be posted regularly every week to any address in India, Burma and Ceylon on payment of Rs. 6 only per annum; For all foreign countries within the Postal Union it will be despatched on payment of 10s. 6d. per annum. All subscriptions are payable in advance and should be remitted to the Manager. "*The Hindu Message*", Srirangam.

to exalt himself in the estimation of others as a wonderfully civilised man who, has by Heaven's choice, been placed in a position to attain to a wonderful condition of mental and spiritual exaltation above all the Indians of his time and generation.

Further, Mr. Srinivasa Rao holds forth as one of the profoundest political thinkers of the age. He says :—"We cannot have democracy and caste. The one or the other must go" Ignorance can go no further. For, the late Mr. W. J. Stead has well said :—"I have never seen any country where people are so free as in America, and also so caste-ridden again as in America." Besides, the Hindu institution of caste is one which has never failed to adjust itself to the conditions of each age. Even under the ideal conditions of the remote past, Mr. E. B. Havell says of the Hindu :—"His ideal of government was essentially democratic." Hence, the institution of caste has existed under all the changes and revolution India has passed through. The Western exploitationist in India uses caste as a weapon in order to prevent the setting up of a progressive form of national government in India which will prevent him from pursuing his course of self-aggrandisement. If Indians like Mr. Srinivasa Rao join the British party of class ascendency in its aggression, we can surely understand them aright. *The Madras Mail* say of him :—"Though himself a Brahmin, the writer has no illusions about what would happen under a Brahmin or Vakil Raj." Mr. Srinivasa Rao was himself long a Vakil, and it was the fact of his belonging to the Vakil Raj that secured to him his place as a District Judge. It is a wonder that he should aspire to be courted by men like this Anglo-Indian editor, who at heart despise him for being a lawyer who acts as the proverbial evil bird which fouls its own nest. It is indeed a wonder of the age that a man of Mr. Srinivasa Rao's high culture and high position should allow himself to be inveigled into this unenviable and ugly position of being regarded as a fit object for being sacrificed at the altar of the Anglo-Indian god of aggressive exploitation. If at least he had gained from this fierce godlet filled with earth-hunger the favour and the concession of *not* being regarded as one of the dreadful and dreaded "Brahmin or Vakil Raj" he might count it as an advantage or achievement of some kind to be proud of during what remains of his career here. But even this is denied to him, for *The Madras Mail* speaks of him "as a Brahmin himself." But Mr. Srinivasa Rao has evidently no qualms of conscience on this score. For, he ought to know as he does not *seem* to, that his "Brahmin oligarchy" is a pure creation of his own prolific imagination. There has never been, as there is not now, a Brahmin oligarchy. Mr. Srinivasa Rao ought to know enough of Indian history to be sure of this unquestionable fact.

The Depressed Classes and the Reforms.

Our Anglo-Indian contemporary *The Madras Mail*, has again in its issue of Saturday November 2nd dipped his pen in—poisoned gall of a deep and dark dye in his frantic opposition to reform. He has not spared a shred of an argument and no possible device which can be of use in order to defend and

maintain the self-seeking system of exploitation which has long consigned India to mercantile robbery and the gradual decline of moral force and stamina. All have failed. The only available shaft left which appears to him efficient for this purpose is the existence of the so-called "depressed classes,"—the "Namasudras" in Bengal, Panchamas in Madras, and elsewhere. We can speak only of the Panchamas in Madras with the knowledge which every Hindu in contact with them possesses. We are quite certain that we can honestly and emphatically repudiate all the statements made by our contemporary regarding the treatment of them by the caste-communities of the South of India in the past. Though they were, no doubt, "untouchable," still their position was far higher than that of "the negro slave of America or the agrestic serf of feudal Europe" to which our contemporary compares it (*vide* issue of November 8th last). We have had among them saints like Nandanar and Tiruppanai Alwar whom even Brahmins have worshipped—and worship still to-day—almost like the divine being himself. We have had among them writers like Tiruvalluvar who have written works which are regarded as almost on a level with the Veda and on which Brahmins and others have exhausted the resources of their learning in order to produce commentaries worthy of their greatness. In Malabar, we have been made personally aware of cases in which Tiyyas have been enabled to gain their Sanskrit learning from Brahmins and others belonging to the upper castes. The polluted classes in this Presidency lived in close and friendly relations with the higher castes, and there never was the oppression and contempt—and even hatred—which marked the relation between the upper castes and the serfs in Mediæval Europe and which did not fail to produce risings and revolts on occasions. No doubt, the polluted classes had to live at a distance from the caste population. But it is absurd to say that there was any slavery on one side or oppression on the other. Even on the *social* side, the relations, as may be seen in villages even now, cannot be at all described as one of alienation due to oppression. Very often it is the Panchama who acts as the priest who, on behalf of the upper castes including the Brahmin, offers propitiation and worship to the ancient village or sylvan deity which is the common object of devotion to all,—both the castemen and the casteless. Men of all castes, including Brahmins, have never been ashamed to make dedicatory offerings to, and to worship, these deities which have Panchama priests. Moreover, at all caste festivals as well as on all occasions of domestic importance, the Panchamas in the service of the Hindu land owner used to receive presents and courtesies of various kinds. All these facts stated above are undeniable and must serve to demonstrate the fact that the ancient relation between the Hindu castes, and Panchamas of South India was one which was far different from and far superior to, that prevailing between the European serf and his feudal lord in mediæval times. We defy our Anglo-Indian enemies of Indian progress to produce anything like the picture outlined above. If there is objection to the proposal to grant house-sites to Panchama labourers, it is because the Tanjore Mirasdars

apprehend that, under the existing conditions, in which political power rests with foreigners resident in India, they will lose even the small amount of hold which they have on their agricultural labourers. The latter, when they are declared full owners of their present sites, will take up service under any one who can give them better remuneration for their labour, and thus the landlord will find it impossible to cultivate his lands and pay the Government taxes which are ever rising with each re-settlement.

The very fact that our Anglo-Indian contemporary speaks only of "Brahmin tyranny" of these casteless classes and of "Brahmin oligarchy," and not of the "tyranny" of non-Brahmins over them—even though the latter occupy the same position as the Brahmins in regard to the depressed classes—shows that our contemporary only cares to use the depressed classes a peg on which to make hang his oposition to the scheme now to the fore, of lessening the irresponsible and tyrannical power now exercised by the Anglo Indian community, official and non-official, in India. Excepting the Christian missionaries who have been influenced in all they do for the casteless people of South India by their theological and propagandistic zeal and not by any genuine humanitarian feeling, what has the non-official mercantile community of Anglo-Indians done to advance educational, social, or economic progress among the Panchamas? We have not heard of any real interest on the part of the Anglo-Indians or "*Indo-British*"—as the new name of Sydenham coinage goes inameliorating the economic, social, or political condition of the Panchamas. Hence, we unhesitatingly declare that their present professions of interest are simply dictated by the desire to overthrow the present movement for freedom and progress in India politics which has grown, chiefly in consequence of the sympathy of the British people in the struggles for freedom of a people who have shared with them the burdens and labours needed to conquer the barbaric hordes of the enemies of the Empire.

Of course, the Namasudras in Bengal and the "*Non-Brahmins*," so-called, in Madras speak of the possible transfer of power in the future to the Brahmins,—for the Anglo-Indians, who have gained a hold on them for their own purposes and by means which are far from honest or decent, have made them speak so. But the truth has been exposed to the world, and will soon unfailingly have its effect. When the Indian deputations which will soon be sent over to England begin their work, Nairism and its Anglo-Indian sponsors and inspirers will stand fully exposed, and the truth known in all its fullness and naked reality. From that time forth, the mendacities now spread abroad by the enemies of India will lose even their present scanty currency, and their authors will have their reward in lasting ignominy and exposure for all time.

Even in the *Madras Mail* lucubration now under criticism, our Anglo-Indian contemporary speaks bitterly of the Indian Congress leaders as "those who would weaken the British character of the services,"—*i.e.*, the administative departments—in India. We have repeatedly pointed out that *all modern Indians* are as sure of their desire to maintain the *British character*

of the services as any members of the community which *The Madras Mail* represents. They do *not* even desire to *get rid altogether* of the *British personnel* of the Indian services, for which alone our Anglo-Indian contemporary cares. Modern Indians only care to see their people advance in power and confidence till they regain their self-respect among the self-governing Communities of the Empire. They cannot have then self-respect without securing self-consciousness and self-determination. All *civilised* Indians of today are thoroughly convinced of this unquestionable fact. It is only those who, while appearing in externals like advanced men, are stultifying themselves by condemning the advance of India in self-respect and towards freedom and self-expression, that still are under obscurantist influences appropriate to those "early civilisations" of which our Anglo-Indian contemporary, *The Madras Mail,* speaks. India, as we have shown above, was never associated with any features of such "early civilisation." Neither the caste system nor the Indian Communities beyond the system had any of the characteristics of an "early civilisation" which our contemporary, out of purely selfish aims of political dominance and aggressive exploitation of Indian resources, seeks to foist on Hindu civilisation, past or present, in order to throw discredit on it. Our ancient institutions, now in decline owing to Western influences of an insidiously antogonistic character, had altogether a different import and basis, —the progress of man in what may be called the achievement and realisation of the spirit of man. It will not be possible for the Anglo-Indian mind with its characteristic leanings and failings to comprehend the full significance of this statement. But, nevertheless, the fact remains, and India stands justified and vindicated before the bar of true enlightenment in the light of the facts stated above regarding her society ideals, usages, and institutions.

Notes and Comments.

The Very Reverend The Dean of St. Paul's—Mr. W. R. Inge—says, in an article on "The Indictment Against Christianity" in the January number of the "Quarterly Review," that "secular civilisation is so brutal, or so servile, that the religious life can only be led in seclusion from it." Nothing can show better how Christianity has failed to influence social and state ideals and activities. In India, on the other hand, religion was made to pervade the entire life of society and the state, Dharma was superior to all other considerations which were purely secular, and both state and society were bound by its commandments. Our greatest sages and saints were the Gurus of our sovereigns and statesmen, and they placed the eternal interests of men—the state, society, family, or individual—above the purely secular interests of the world. Hence, the Hindu religion and people have had constantly to remain in an attitute of rupture, struggle, and antagonism with the standards of spirituality and morality prevailing or possible among the pagan and non-Aryan communities and nations among the world. But now the time has come when we, too, are compelled—and in fact we have long been compelled—to banish Dharma from secular, state, and even social life. With us, too, it has now become true that "the religious life can only be led in seclusion" from secular civilisation, or state and social life. No wonder that in Modern India, as elsewhere and especially in the Western world, the strife of warring interests has become prominent in public life. Mr. Inge says:—"This war has grievously stained the reputation of Europe." Public

life in Modern India is also getting estranged fom the ideals of purity, simplicity, and sincerity for which the Hindus have always been noted and which they owed to their religious ideals and training.

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Dean Inge wrires :—"When we speak of Christianity as a factor in human life, we must not identify it with the opinions or actions of the multitudes who are nominally Christians. We must not even identify it without qualification with the types of character exhibited by those who try to frame their lives in accordance with its precepts." This second sentence is, indeed, a strange one. If even those who try to frame their lives in accordance with its precepts" are unable to develop or exhibit a type of character which can be accepted as, or identified with what is, truly Christian, then it is no wonder that Mr. Inge is unable to regard with approval "the opinions or actions of the multitudes who are nominally Christians" to whom he refers in the first sentence. We thus see that both "the multitudes" and the upper or inner few who pass as Christians have failed to make Christtanity a fruitful "factor in human life." It is no wonder that the social and secular life of the West is "brutal" and "servile."

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The Venerable Dean contents and consoles himself with the absurd and unsatisfying ineptitude,—"Christianity is a spiritual dynamic, which has very little to do with the mechanism of social life." He is simply triffing with a matter of serious import when he speaks of "the *mechanism* of social life." Mechanism or no mechanism, he must plainly confess that Christianity as a spiritual force or dynamic has ceased to influence the social and secular life, whether of the multitudes or those in the upper ranks of life who pass as Christians. Sri Krishna says, on the other hand,—(IX. 30, 31)—

अपि चेत्सुदुराचारो भजते मामनन्य भाक् ।

साधुरेव समन्तव्यः सम्यग्व्यवसितो हि सः ।

क्षिप्रं भवति धर्मात्मा शश्वच्छां तिं निगच्छति ।

"Even if a man who is very bad in his morals has devout faith in me and worships me withont fixing his mind on any one else, he must certainly be deemed to be good in conduct (even though he was not such before), for his heart has become fixed on the truth. So he soon has his mind turned towards morally right conduct (Dharma), and soon attains lasting peace"

The example of Arjuna is decisive here. As soon as his doubts were removed and he was convinced that Sri Krishna was the Supreme Being and began to have faith in Him and worship him as such, he entered upon his Kshatriya duty of fighting with his enemies before him, regardless of all consequences. Hence, the moment Hindn religion becomes a real spiritual dynamic with any one, it must at once transform him into a scrupulous adherent of Dharma, and therefore transform his relations to social, secular, and state life. That the Venerable Dean Inge has to assert that "Christianity is a spiritual dynamic, which has very little to do with the mechanism of social life" is a sad avowal of its failure as an ethical force and is a cruel indictment against its spiritual efficacy.

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According to Dean Inge, the Christian society reached its highest standard of virtue during the persecutions of the second century ; it was "the golden age of the Church" and of "the Christian society." He says :—"Great importance was laid on truth, integrity in business, and sexual purity. The human body must be kept holy, as the temple of God. Revenge was forbidden, and injustice was endured with meekness and pardon," "For a short time, the artificial selection effected by the persecutions kept the Church pure ; and from the happy pictnres whlch we can construct of this period we can judge what a really Christian society would be like." We see, then, there can be no "really Christian society" in an age of civilisation and of tolerance accompanying the growth of culture and refinement. There can be no "really Christian society" without being artificially propped by the persecntion and violence which are charac-

teristic of a people and age immersed in barbarism. Christianity and civilisation cannot co-exist,—*i.e.*, civilisation as understood in the West.

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Dean Inge says further:—"The repudiation of the Christian ethical standard has been equally thorough in commercial competition ..The present condition of industry is such that a heavy premium is offered to mere cupidity; the fraternal social life which Christianity enjoins is often literally impossible except at the cost of economic suicide; in a competitive system a business man, is the very force of circumstances, a warrior, though war is an enemy of love and destructive of Christian society. When the object of bargaining is to give as little and gain as much as possible, the Christian standard of values has been rejected as completely as it was by Machiavelli himself. The competition between two parties to a bargain is often a competition in unserviceableness. Money is usually made by creating a local and temporary monopoly, which enables the vendor to squeeze the purchaser. In all such transactions, one man's gain is another man's loss. This state of things, the evils of which are almost universally organised and deplored, marks the end of the glorification of productive industry which was one result of the Reformation."

* * *

With regard to the above, the position of Hinduism is that, while there is nothing immoral in competition itself, the man disciplined in Dharma will not even in industry and bargaining, allow self-interest to absorb his mind so much that it will be quiescent when the other party suffers any real injury. The function of Dharma is to soften the working of natural laws, and make social man contented, peaceable, and happy. It is impossible to make human society realise Utopian ideals in the actual daily routine of life. But, if Dharma is a living spiritual force affecting the individual's mind and ideal of life, it will not fail to influence the operation of natural law in the sphere of economics and social life will progressively tend towards higher ethical standards. Hindu society was based on the ideal of renunciation, and hence we see that the caste system, as it was actually working in ancient times, broke the force of competition in social practice. Each caste confined itself to its own function in society and hence knowledge, wealth, authority, and business capacity did not tend to become concentrated in the same hands, as in modern societies. The evils of economic war which Dean Inge deplores in the above extract never prevailed in the Hindu India of the past and are entirely due to the influence of modern civilisation. We are glad that Dean Inge acknowledges that modern economic war and its evils are "one result of the Reformation." And yet we frequently notice that Christian writers proclaim at the top of their voices that the Reformation movement was in reality a return to the pure and primitive age of Christianity when the prevailing social and spititual ideals were still influenced by the inspiration and example of the redeeming Christ, and not simply by the traditions regarding him which were recorded in a later age by the writers known as the Evangelists of the Gospel.

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Dean Inge says:—"The immunity from militarism hitherto enjoyed by Britain and the United States was a fortunate accident, not a proof of higher morality." In both countries, it has been supposed that peace is the greatest interest of the democracy. For, productive industry can only flourish in what are called "the piping times of peace," and it is only productive industry that can furnish work and wages to the indusrrious workman of the Democracy. But, what is the truth regarding the love of peace and the peace of love supposed to be a characteristic of the productive and industrial life of modern democracies? Let the venerable Dean Inge speak for himself:—"The money—making life has of late become more and more frankly predatory and anti-social. The great trusts, and the arts of the company-promoter can hardly be said to perform any social service; they exist levy tribute on the public. We may therefore say that, though war between the leading

nations of the world had become a strange idea and a far-off memory, we had by no means risen above the principles and practices of war in our internal life." The struggle between capital and labour, and the struggles for supremacy between political parties and factions in the state—these partook of the nature, and were associated with some of the methods, of war. We have also frequently known of actual wars organised against the state by discontented factious of its citizens. Mr. Inge writes:—"Revolutionary strikes, prepared long in advance by forced levies of money which were candidly called war-funds, had as their avowed aim the paralysis of the industries of the country and the reduction of the population to distress by withholding the necessaries of life. These acts of civil war, and disgraceful outbreaks of criminal anarchism, were justified by persons who proposed a conscientious objection to defending their homes and families against a foreign invader. This state of mind proves how little essential connexion there is between democracy and peace." The exploiting and acquisitive instinct in Western man is fully operative in peace, and is most at work among those nations and communities which boast of having passed the civilisation of militancy into the industrial stage. It is the love of colonial expansion and imperial domination on lines similar to the British that led to the planing and preparation for this tremendous war of aggression in Europe by the Germans.

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What, then, is the remedy? The Western world wants the light of true wisdom, the illumination of a truly spiritual religion which can be practised. and not simply preached from a thousand platforms,—a religion which aims at bringing peace and contentment to the mind of man, and does not seek to spread itself aggressively over the populations of all countries regardless of the means it employs. The Chinese Celestial spoke truly when he said, "First, the missionary; then the Consul; and last the General." An aggressive, propagandistic religion must necessarily pave the way for commercial exploitation, colonial expansion, and Imperial domination. The kinship between them all lies on the surface. If the world is to be free from strife, a new order of ideas must spread over the peoples and nations inhabiting it. It is to the sages and teachers of Veda and Vedanta that men must turn in order to flood the entire earth with the saving waters of spirituality which will assuage or suppress the material longings of civilised men and enable them to realise that each and every jiva (living soul) is kin with the Isvara who is all love and light and that, therefore, he can be said truly to live only when he gives up aggression and strife in all its forms as the attribute of the brute and is unworthy of the reason and the spirit which alone is human and worthy in man.

Olla Podrida.

There is no diversity of news to give this time. We have reached peace. This fact is so joyful and glorious that we have no time for anything else. God be praised for such a glorious consummation.

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But in the midst of this tumult of joy let us remember that we must preserve a balanced mind and true piety and prayerfulness. The *Recessional* written by the great poet of imperialism rises to our lips and hearts.

"The tumult and the shouting dies,
The captains and the kings depart.
Stil stands thine ancient sacrifice
A humble and a contrite heart.
Lord God of Hosts be with us yet,
Let we forget, lest we forget."

***

"Peace hath her victories no less renowned than war." But they do not and cannot have wealth of pomp and display. They merely sweeten life; they do not take it. But the white victories of peace are dearer far in God's eyes than the red victories of war.

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Sir Sydney Olivier recently pleaded for a supernational control of the government of the primitive peoples. May such a

thing be! But who are the primitive peoples?

* * *

A correspondent writing to the *New India* on 9-11-1918 says that the cinemas are more often than not enemies of morality and art. They live on sensation, and sensationalism is fatal to the balance of the moral as well as the æsthetic faculties. What an outlandish name—cinema! God made the theatres. But who made the cinemas?

SCRUTATOR.

The Economic Aspect of the Montagu-Chelmsford Reform Scheme.

BY PRAMATHA NATH BOSE.

(*concluded.*)

II

The truth is, our Government however desirous it may be of encouraging indigenous industry, it cannot do so effectively, because it cannot make and difference between Indians and European British subjects and subjects of Powers in friendly alliance. Three or four decades ago the industrial situation of Japan was similar to that of India. Within that period Indians like the Japanese have been receiving higher scientific and technical education. The former are not less intelligent than the latter; if any thing, they are probably more so. Why has Japan advanced industrially so fast, while India has lagged behind so sadly? The main reason appears to me to be that the Japanese Government has no difficulty in discriminating between the Japanese and the foreigners. When it helps industrial development, it helps such development by Japanse agency. On the contrary, when our Gevernment helps industry, it virtually helps foreign industry in India, that is to say, spends a portion of the revenue derived by taxing the impoverished people of India for the benefit of foreigners. It is possible for our Government to enact laws which would prevent foreigners from owing shares in the great Indian Banks, from acquiring "the right to work mines," and from becoming "a member of the Stock Exchange," as the Japanese Government has done in favour of the Japanese? Just after the War with China, the Japanese Government saved the industrial Bank of Japan from collapse by using a large portion of the Chinese indemnity, 3,740,000 *yen*, equivalent to Rs. 5,610,000, in taking over the debentures of the Bank. Is it possible for our Government to secure such indemnity for India, or to apply a large portion of it for the special benefit of a Bank conducted by Indians?

It is often urged, that the industries conducted by foreigners afford employment to our labourers, artissans, etc. The number of such employees according to the last census is only 2'I millions, that is about 0'8 per cent, of the population. It is apparently to increase their number that the authors advocate the spread of education so as "to inculcate a higher standard of living" among labourers. I may here quote (with a few verbal alterations) what I have said elsewhere* in regard to a similar suggestion which was made before the industrial Commission last year.

"The elevation of the standard of living of these people (the labourers) means:

(1) substitution of the finer and cheaper mill-made, especially imported, fabrics for the coarser and dearer, though much more substantial and durable hand-made cloths, and the more plentiful use of the former in the form of shirts, coats, socks, etc.

(2) The substitution of cigarette for *hooka* smoking, fine shoes for coarse sandals, sugar for *gur*, bottled and tinned medicins and foods for inexpensive indigenous simple and fresh foods. and of strong liquor for home prewed ale.

(3) The acquisition of such habits as tea-drinking and possibly also of a taste for expensive musical instruments, such as the harmonium, gramaphone, etc, and for urban amusements, such as theatres, cinemas etc.

Such 'elevation' no doubt translates the sparsely clad simble rustic into something of a fairly well draped 'gentleman' with 'gentlemanly tastes,—a transformation which is usually applauded as 'progress.' It undoubtedly benefits the capitalists (mostly foreign) whose object is to exploit the peoples, parti-

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*" Essays and Lectures on the Industrial Development of India and other Indian subjects," pp. 115—118.

cularly of Asia and Africa. But does it benefit the latter? Do they become healthier? Decidedly not. The mill hands of Bombay who, some time back were described by the *Times of India* as Bombay's slaves, and who are what the authors would like the factory and mine labourers of other parts of India to be, or certainly from all accounts much more miserable than any section of their congeners out in the country.

It would probably be urged that 'Bombay's slaves' are no worse than similar workmen in England, and that, in the interests of the community, it may be desirable to sacrifiice the happiness and crush the manhood of a section of it. Certainly, from the strictly material standpoint, the formation of an industrial class in the modern sense has added very largely to the wealth and material prosperity of England. But would the creation of a similar class in India add appreciably to her wealth? I think not, and for the following reasons.

First, most of the large industries in India (including Burma) are owned and managed by Europeans, and I have elsewhere(' The Illusions of New India," Ch. IV) shown, that, under present condition, they would always remain overwhelmingly non-Indian. So their profits wood mainly go out of the country and the high emoluments of management would be chiefly shared by non-Indians.

Secondly, India, unlike England, is mainly agricultural and will always remain so. Agriculture being the main source of the wealth of the country, anything which interferes with its development is much to be deplored. At present the people who work in industrial concerns may, and sometimes do on their return to their homes devote a portion of their savings to such development. But that would not be the case if they were enticed away from land altogether by urban 'comforts.' The propagandists of 'uplift' and of so-called 'education.' have succeeded in manufacturing a good number of the most resourceful and intelligent of our cultivating class into clerks and lawyers. If the propagandists of industrialism succeed in converting any considerable section of them into adjuncts of the industrial machinary, they might well exclaim—Save us from our friends.

Thirdly, there are some cottage industries notably the weaving industry, which though decadent, still maintain a struggling existence. Attempts are being made to enable them to hold their own by the introduction of improved appliances. If industrialisation after the Western fashion be carried to any considerable extent such attempts would fail, and the decadence of cottage industries instead of being arrested, would be accelerated; directly, by the 'industrialised' like the 'educated' people ceasing to patronise the products of cottage industries, and indirectly, by their frittering away upon unsubstantial 'comforts' and brummagem fineries, resources which might have gone towards the development of indigenous industry by indigenous agency. In fact 'elevation' of the standard of living and through industrialisation, under existing conditions, would I am inclined to think, tend, on the whole, to impoverish rather than to enrich the Indian people. I have all my life been an advocate of teachnical education in India and of industrial development by indigenous agency, and I am not so blindly partial to cottage industries as to think that unsupplemented by power industries they would be able to stem the tide of foreign imports. But I would not, at the same time, take any steps which would be detrimental to the interests of industries."

Forced, premature change in the standard of living has been doing incalculable mischief.

"Impoverishment is a comparative term. If one having comparatively more money than before, has yet less for his wants, he is certainly poorer. I do not think I am exaggerating when I say that the great majority of our middle class (including the well-to-do peasantry and artisans) have been impoverished in this sense. The candle burns at both ends. Their resources (though in many cases increased by high wages) are exhausted on the one hand by the inordinate enhancement of the prices of indigenous necessaries, and on the other by the so called "elevation" of the standard of living which is enlarging their wants. Even incomes which formerly would have been regarded as opulence are now hardly deemed to be bare competence. While milk and the various preparations of milk which form our principal articles of nutrition suited to the climate have become so very dear that the great majority of our middle class cannot afford to get them in sufficient quantity for bare subsistence,

they have to spend comparatively large sums upon the gratification of the new tastes which have sprung up for clothing, shoes, socks, etc., and for amusements and games, such as theatrical performances, circuses, cinemas, billiards, football, tennis, etc., which have superseded the much less expensive indigenous amusements and games. For, the average man blindly follows the prevailing fashion; and with him show counts for more than substance, and the ornamental prevails over the useful."*

Industrial development by indigenous agency is the only way in which a Government can most effectively help the material advancement of its subjects. Unfortunately our Government is so situated that, I am afraid, it cannot do that. If this is the truth, as I am strongly inclined to think it is, the sooner it is recognised the better would it be for all parties. Facts must be taken as actual, and it would be best for my Neo-Indian brethren not to delude themselves with hopes, which, reason tells us, can never be realised.†

III

There is a hope held out by the illustrious authors, that the "castle-in-the-air" character of the Legislative bodies is to be removed by broad-basing it upon local self-government. The principle which is to govern it has been laid down in the following formula:—

"There should be, as far as possible, complete popular control in local bodies, and the largest possible independence for them of outside control."

Everything would depend upon the interpretation which, in practice, is put upon the qualifications, "as far as possible," and "the largest possible."

As I have said elsewhere,‡ "from time immemorial, the village has been the Soul of India, and until the establishment of British Rule enjoyed a very large measure of self-government. The villages managed their own affairs relating to law, education, police, sanitation, public works, etc., in a way which was well suited to their social and material condition. Village self-government was the one vital thing in the country which not only kept society together but made it prosperous despite the divisions of caste and despite the misrule of tyrannically and viciously disposed despots, whether Hindu, Buddhist or Mahomedan. The Central Government might be dead and rotten to the core, but that did not seriously affect the village life."

Village self-government is not a new thing for India; it is not a boon to be conferred but a right to be restored, not a generous gift, but a just reparation of a grave injury, not a new structure but an old one to be rehabilitated.

"Village self-government raises no question of the Indian domination of the kith and kin of the British Government, of the substitution of one oligarchy by another, of the suitability or unsuitability of the Western Parliamentary system, and of the attainment of the qualifications requisite for it, and I see no very serious objection to its being granted at once."*

Village Councils would afford a strong foundation for the building up of the structure of Responsible Government. Representatives of the Village Councils could be sent to the Circle Councils, and thence to the District Boards, and from these Boards to the Provincial Councils. The problem of Representation would thus be solved without much difficulty.

If, however, the Bengal Village Self-Government Bill, which has been quite recently introduced into the Bengal Legislative Council apparently based on the principle enunciated above, is an indication of the sort of self-government which the Village Councils are to be endowed with, they would, I am afraid, partake more or less of the make-believe character of the Legislative Councils. We cannot have any better indication. The latest views of the Government of India are reflected in it, and it has been introduced by the Indian Member of the Executive Council of Bengal, an ex-President

* "Survival of Hindu Civilization, Part I, The Impoverishment of India and its Remedy," pp. 32 33.

† My criticism here has been destructive. I may say, however, that I have suggested a solution of the Industrial problem in my "Impoverishment of India and its Remedy."

‡ "Give the People back their own" (an open letter to His Excellency the Viceroy).

* "Give the People Back their own," P. 35.

of the Indian National Congress, who was the first Indian Member of the Executive Council of the Government of India.

The following extracts from an article which I contributed to a recent issue of the *Modern Review* (June, 1918) criticising the Bill will give an idea of the sort of Village Councils which the Bill proposes to establish :—

" It is undoubtedly necessary that Government should exercise a certain amount of control over the village committees. But self-government to be successful must be real, and the control should be so exercised that the committees may feel it as little as possible, and that their sense of responsibility may not be impaired. Too much supervision, too many rules and regulations, and too rigid observance of these would deprive them of the amount of freedom, initiative, prestige and responsibility which is essential for the success of the measure.

The Dafadars and Chaukidars will be the most important, if not the only servants of the village. They are, of course, to be controlled by the village committee, and are enjoined to obey its orders in regard to keeping watch in the vilage, and in regard to other matters connected with their duties clauses (22 and 26 ix). These duties, however, are prescribed (clause 26) in such a manner that they could be performed independently, without any reference whatever to the committee. Their allegiance would apparently be divided between three masters —the nearest police officer, the circle officer (representing the District Magistrate), and the village committee. And as their appointment, punishment, and dismissal, and the determination of their pay and equipment would rest with the officials (clauses 23, 24 and 25), it is not difficult to predict whom they would try to please and who would really control them. The 'self-government' of the village committee would thus become a highsounding, solemn sham. No capable, self-respecting man would desire the position of a 'master' who has but nominal authority over his servants.

Maximum of authority and minimum of control should be the fundamental principle of genuine local self-government. The village committee, however, has, as we have just seen, been entrusted with the minimum of authority, and has, as we shall presently see, been burdened with the maximum of control, and control too of a most undesirable character. The control is vested partly in the circle boards and partly in the District Magistrate. In both cases it would practically be in the hands of the circle officers, who are, I believe, usually, if not invariably, young Sub-Deputy Magistrates. This conclusion is confirmed by Sir Satyendra Prasanna Sinha's statement 'that is intended that the new system should be introduced gradually in districts where the circle system has been introduced, and circle officers are available to assist the village committee. The 'assistance' would virtually mean control. Man, as ordinarily constituted, is fond of the exercise of power; and the younger and more energetic he is, the more marked is this fondness. Actuated by it, if not, in some cases, by any baser motive the Sub-Deputies and possibly also the Sub-Inspectors of the nearest police stations, to whom also the Chaukidars and Dafadars would be partly subordinate, would, I have but little doubt, often needlessly meddle with the work of the village committees and hamper it. In fact the 'assistance' would, I am afraid, be often rendered in such a manner as to make the village committee the lowest and the most subservient link of the official chain, and 'self-government' a farce. An exceptionally broad-minded, sympathetic, energetic and experienced District Magistrate would no doubt keep his subordinates in check. But such officers are rare. Besides, under the present system of administration, the man is generally swallowed up in the machine, and even the best of district officers would not have much scope for freedom and initiative. For, cut and dry rules would be framed by government 'regulating the powers and duties of village committees in regard to sanitation, conservancy, drainage, buildings, roads, bridges and water-supply,' and 'in regard

Our Present Situation, Social and Religious

BY

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to schools and dispensaries,' etc. (clause III, 2i), and the function of the district officers would be to see that the rules are observed—a function which would be usually performed by their subordinates the Sub-Deputies."

"Government proposes to overcome 'the evils which menace health and life' and which have been gradually growing in enormity and intensity by the expansion of the Sanitary Department so that the Sanitary Commissioner may have 'a large executive agency' to see that the 'model rules of village hygiene' framed by Government are carried into practice. And the money required for 'the sanitation, conservancy, drainage and water-supply of the village, for the establishment, repair, maintenance or management of primary schools and dispensaries, for any other local works likely to promote the health, comfort, and convenience of the public,' as well as 'for the salaries and equipment of the Dafadars and Chaukidars, and the salary of the Secretary (if any),' is to be raised by taxing the villagers (clause 38 of the Bengal Village Self-Government Bill).

It is not difficult to predict, that in the great majority of cases, especially if the principles underlying the Bengal bill be applied to all other parts of India, this method of financing the proposed Village Committees would be productive of great hardship, would, in fact, lead to increased impoverishment and consequent further decrease of vitality and aggravation of the evils which menace health and life."

The economic problem is the most pressing and the most immediate of all the problems with which we are confronted to-day. More food or more nourishing food is the most urgent need of ninety per cent. of our people. The Montagu-Chelmsford Scheme not only does not hold out any prospect of their being able to obtain it, but, on the contrary, as it is likely to lead to largely increased taxation, it is calculated to add to the heavy load of their misery.

HINDU MESSAGE

VOL. I.

OCTOBER 1917—APRIL 1918.

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Answers to Questions by the University Commission (Calcutta).

(BY A MADRAS PROFESSOR).

[Note.—The answers to the questions are not given in the order in which the questions are issued. The continuity of my answers depends, therefore, on the order that I have adopted in setting forth the answers.]

(*continued.*)

QUESTION XVI

The Indian student is now working with the Damoclean sword of examinations ever over his head, and in a dry atmosphere in which he finds no worthy opportunities in practical life, after passing the various examinations. The present system of University Education no doubt *creates* enough of intellectual coriosity in the Indian student, but the *shrewd* Indian student brushes aside that curiosity at once, because it will not *pay* him. The Indian student has *capacity* and *will* to work unostentatiously and intelligently in any department of knowledge, but he has the problem of life always staring in his face. I know that various students have thus gone into oblivion. I know also that several absolutely inferior students have worked up to glory by pretence and sham work. The number of students of ability who have really made use of their intellectual curiosity for the advancement of learning and for the progress of the country at the present time in India, could be counted on one's fingers. The present University system of education cannot be said to have given birth to no intellectual curiosity at all, but then the forces of *sham* and *moral weakness* in the life of the country are killing this curiosity at the very birth.

The problems of life relating to India and the world could be solved only by men who have *character*, added to *training*. There is much *talk* of *character* being the very aim of education, but it is so only in talk, and perhaps also on paper to a great extent. My own experience is that in the last decade or fifteen years, there has been a steadily growing fall in the *character* of our students, why of our leading men and elders as well, so that, now, the so-called training given to our students in the University is merely

turning out to use an extreme expression, intellectual humbugs, who have their eyes always pointed towards immediate purposes and selfish gains, and not at all, except in very rare cases, towards the calls of duty or the needs of the nation. It is a pity that it is so. How to remedy this state of affairs passes one's comprehension. My own view is that *the Universities in India should be based on spirituality*; That is to say, the University must have *two distinct functions*:—

1. of training students for material life and
2. of maintaining and developing their traditional spiritual life.

No religion is superior and no religion is inferior, at least as we understand religion at the present time, after the great Herbert Spencer, Tennyson and Carlyle have spoken to us even in these materialistic centuries. Every student must *live* his religion and religion must really *bind* men, as the word itself implies.

I do not believe in the so-called moral and religious instruction in schools and colleges, at fixed hours, nor do I believe in the teaching of religion, as a mere department of knowledge, like Mathematics or Philosophy, as the Benares Hindu University has proposed to do. The University *in India* must have two sides to it always, *a Home section* and *a culture section*, if I may so name them for purposes of reasoning. In the "Home section" the students must *lead* their *natural* home lives in accordance with the dictates of their *own* religions, and in the "culture section", we must have all sides of *culture*, theoretical and practical. So far as the Hindu are concerned, I have a scheme of my own for such a University College, but I do not expect to have any opportunity of putting my scheme in to practice.

QESTION XIV

The above answers to *Questions* I, VI, VII, XV, and XVI indicate my own answer to questions XIV and V. The Government will be connected with the University as its very patron and life, if my scheme is taken up by the Government. If the Government takes no part in the organisation of such a University, and if the Government leaves it to the people, then the Government has its usual ultimate control over the University, to see that such a University works in co-operation with the government as established by law. A University of the sort referred to by me must and can be established and worked successfully only by the government; and such a University must really form part of the government.

QUESTION V

Every College established in accordance with the aims set forth above may be a University by itself. Instead of several Colleges being controlled by a central University, we had better have several Universities *co-operating* for purposes of mutual improvement in all the sides of the life of the University. When several Colleges are tacked on as tails to a central University, there is absolutely no connection between the ideals and the ideas of the central University and the *practical* modes of instruction and training obtaining in the colleges under its control. On paper alone the connection exists. True life in a University is possible only if it *starts, conducts and ends* its *own* ideals and only if it has its *own* power to organise and conduct its work, *with independence*.

A *Central University Board of advice*, composed *merely* of the Boards of control of the various Universities, *all* the members bring *actually* engaged in educational work, will be able to act as a beautiful advising body to the individual Universities, and also as a body responsible to the government in all matters relating to educational policy and administration. The Central Board will be a corporate body which will always have a *living* connection with the various University colleges and will easily be able to arrange all necessary details.

(*To be continued.*)

Our Social Problem and the Bhagavad Gita By K. S. Ramaswamy Sastri B.A., B.L.,

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Printed and Published by T. K. Balasubrahmanya Aiyar B. A. at the Sri Vani Vilas Press, Srirangam.